



ENOCH PRATT *free* LIBRARY



For Immediate Release
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Pratt Library Grows Diploma and Career Certificate Program with Crown Castle Partnership
*Crown Castle's Connected by Good Program Supports Additional Students for the
Career Online High School*

Baltimore, MD (September 1, 2021)— Following its pilot year in 2021, the Enoch Pratt Free Library will grow its Career Online High School (COHS) by 18 students in partnership with Crown Castle's Connected by Good program. COHS helps adults earn both a high school diploma and career certificate at no cost. Program expansion includes serving a greater number of students and wrap around services from specially trained library staff before and after enrollment, including higher education and career counseling.

COHS was designed to help address Baltimore's education gap and provide career pathways. There are currently an estimated 90,000 residents in Baltimore without a high school diploma. Those without a high school diploma face barriers to employment and, on average, earn less than high school and college graduates—one-third of residents 25 and older without a high school diploma live in poverty.

COHS provides a pathway to career success for many that have been locked out of economic growth in the region. With a self-paced and flexible format that can be completed in 6-18 months, participants cover topics like English, math, science, social studies, and health. They then go on to earn a certificate in one of nine high-demand career fields such as child care and education, security professional, food and hospitality, office management, and retail customer service.

"Last year we were able to enroll 20 people in Career Online High School. Five have already graduated, while the rest continue to complete their course work," says Pratt Library President and CEO Heidi Daniel. "The generous support of Crown Castle and the David and Barbara B. Hirschhorn Foundation will allow us to give out 18 more scholarships this year. This is a program that is changing lives and opening doors for people in our community. We could not do it without the support of these generous organizations."

"The Pratt Library's Career Online High School takes an innovative approach to addressing the achievement gap," said Ashley Greenspan, Public Affairs Manager at Crown Castle. "Crown Castle is excited to partner with them on this initiative to expand access to the tools people and families need to succeed in today's in-demand industries."

The partnership with the Enoch Pratt Free Library is part of Crown Castle's [Connected by Good](#) initiative to work with community partners to improve spaces where people connect, promote public safety, and, in this case, advance access to education and technology. Previously, Crown Castle has partnered with the Digital Harbor Foundation, the Boys and Girls Club of Baltimore, and other nonprofits across the state and the country.

For more information regarding the COHS program, click [here](#).

About Enoch Pratt Free Library

The Enoch Pratt Free Library, the nation's first free library system, opened its doors in 1886, the result of the generosity and imagination of businessman and philanthropist Enoch Pratt. Mr. Pratt envisioned a public library where "races, ages, and socio-economic classes mingled and people could educate themselves – without cost," and his passionate belief continues to guide the organization. Today's Pratt Library – Baltimore's public library and the Maryland State Library Resource Center – consists of the Central Library, 21 branches, two bookmobiles, the Mobile Job Center, the Pratt Centers for Technology Training, and the Regional Information Center. The Library's mission is to empower, enrich, and enhance the quality of life for all through equitable access to information, services, and opportunity.